

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 USSS-00 NSAE-00 /031 W

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P 021301Z NOV 73

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4647

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

S E C R E T JERUSALEM 1244

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MOPS, EG, IS, UN

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI CEASEFIRE

1. I HAD LONG TALK MORNING NOVEMBER 2 WITH UNTSO POLITICAL ADVISOR GORGE, WHO IS ACTING AS UNEF POLITICAL ADVISOR AND WHO WAS ON BRIEF VISIT BACK TO JERUSALEM. GORGE (WHO MUST BE PROTECTED) WAS RATHER DEPRESSED ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS ON EGYPTIAN SIDE, AND SAID HE COULD NOT GIVE MORE THAN 50-50 ODDS THAT CEASEFIRE WILL HOLD. HE HAS BEEN DEEPLY INVOLVED WITH EGYPTIANS, NUMBER OF WHOM HE KNOWS WELL, SINCE OCTOBER 26. FROM THIS EXPERIENCE HE HAS IMPRESSION THAT EGYPTIAN POLITICAL EFFORTS HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO SERVE EGYPTIAN MILITARY POSITION, RATHER THAN THE REVERSE.

2. GORGE SAID HE AND SIILASVOU ARE BEING PRESSED CONSTANTLY ON THE RETURN TO OCTOBER 22 LINES ON BASIS OF MAP WHICH FAHMI HAS SHOWN THEM NUMBER OF TIMES. GORGE UNDERSTANDS FROM UN SECRETARIAT OFFICER WHO JUST ARRIVED IN CAIRO TO HELP OUT TEMPORARILY THAT UNEF IS NOT TO BE DEPLOYED ALONG CEASEFIRE LINES UNTIL ISRAELIS HAVE PULLED BACK, PRESUMABLY AT EGYPTIAN INSISTENCE. MEANWHILE, HE SAID, UNEF PERSONNEL IN ISMAILIA AREA REPORT THAT EGYPTIANS ARE FEVERISHLY REEQUIPPING FORCES ON NORTHERN EAST BANK SECTOR WITH ALL KINDS OF WEAPONS INCLUDING THE HEAVIEST.

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3. HE AND SIILASVOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN CAIRO, IN SOME QUARTERS AT LEAST, THE FEELING THAT EGYPTIANS HAVE NOT BEEN DEFEATED AND ARE IN RELATIVELY GOOD POSITION. THEY MET SWISS AMBASSADOR,

WHOM GORGE KNOWS WELL, AND OTHER WESTERN AMBASSADORS WHO REFLECTED THIS VIEW AND EXPRESSED OPINION THAT ISRAELI GAINS ON WEST BANK OF CANAL HAD LITTLE SIGNIFICANCE. HAVING SEEN THESE GAINS AND STRENGTH OF ISRAELI POSITION ON THE GROUND, SIILASVOU AND GORGE WERE ASTOUNDED AT THIS BUT CONSIDER IT TO BE RESULT OF ISOLATION FROM TRUE PICTURE ON PART OF EVEN USUALLY WELL INFORMED OBSERVERS.

4. IN DISCUSSING EGYPTIAN MOTIVATION, GORGE REITERATED THAT PRESSURE FROM EGYPTIANS TO HAVE UNEF MOVE INTO SUEZ AREA IN FIRST DAYS HAD BEEN INTENSE. FAHMI HAD INSISTED THAT FINNS BE MOVED DIRECTLY FROM AIRPORT TO SUEZ, AND SIILASVOU, LACKING INSTRUCTIONS, FELT HIMSELF UNDER SUCH PRESSURE THAT HE CALLED FROM FAHMI'S OFFICE TO NEW YORK AND TALKED WITH WALDHEIM'S FINNISH AIDE. LATTER TOLD HIM INSTRUCTIONS WERE ON THE WAY TO PERMIT THIS. (UNEF OFFICERS NEVERTHELESS WERE RELUCTANT TO MOVE THROUGH ISRAELI LINES DURING DARKNESS AND HELD OFF UNTIL DAWN. AS WE KNOW, THEY THEREUPON ENCOUNTERED CERTAIN DELAYS IN ANY CASE.) IN RETROSPECT, GORGE FEELS EGYPTIANS WERE DESPERATE TO PREVENT FURTHER DETERIORATION OF MILITARY POSITION, WHICH, HE SAYS, THEY SUCCESSFULLY DID. GORGE OBSERVED THAT SOME OF EGYPTIAN DEMORALIZATION AT THAT TIME SEEMED TO HAVE RESULTED FROM VERY INTENSIVE ISRAELI AIR BOMBARDMENT ON 22D BEFORE FIRST CEASEFIRE. HE HAD HEARD FROM OBSERVERS ON THE SCENE THAT IAF FLEW 50-PLANE RAIDS DURING GOOD PART OF DAY EVERY 15 MINUTES PARTICULARLY IN SUEZ AREA WITH EXTRAORDINARY ACCURACY OF BOMBING. RESULTS WERE STILL TO BE SEEN AND WERE IMPRESSIVE, HE SAID.

5. GORGE SAID THAT QUESTION HEPUT TO DAYAN ABOUT ISRAELI WILLINGNESS TO RETURN TO OCTOBER 22 LINES (JERUSALEM 1228), HAD REPRESENTED THE CARRYING OUT OF FORMAL UN OBLIGATION. HE WAS NOT TOO SURPRISED NO REPLY HAD BEEN AS YET RECEIVED. I ASKED HIM WHETHER HE THOUGHT RETURN TO THESE LINES WAS FEASIBLE PROPOSITION FROM UNEF POINT OF VIEW. HE DECLINED DIRECT REPLY, BUT POINTED TO COMPLEXITY OF SITUATION IN WHICH ISRAELI COMBAT UNITS WERE MOVING RAPIDLY AT SCATTERED POINTS,

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PRECEDED IN MANY CASES BY RECON UNITS.

6. COMMENT: IT IS HARDLY SUPRISING THAT EGYPTIANS ARE RE-EQUIPPING THEIR FORCES. MORE IMPORTANT IS QUESTION WHETHER THEY ARE IMPROVING MILITARY POSITION TO BOLSTER POLITICAL CLOUT, OR WHETHER THEY STILL SEE THEMSELVES IN UNFINISHED MILITARY PHASE. GORGE'S FEELING THAT MILITARY ENDS HAVE UPPER HAND OVER POLITICAL IS CAUSE FOR CONCERN, BUT HE WOULD BE FIRST TO ADMIT LIMITATIONS OF HIS PERSPECTIVE.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 11 MAY 1999  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ARMISTICE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 02 NOV 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** ADS  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** 11652 XGDS-1  
**Errors:** n/a  
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**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
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**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 02 JAN 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <02-Jan-2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <11-Jan-2002 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI CEASEFIRE  
**TAGS:** MOPS, EG, IS, UNTSO, UN, UNEF  
**To:** STATE INFO TEL AVIV  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005